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C O N F I D E N T I A L LISBON 000595

SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR AF, INL, G/TIP, DRL, F

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [SNAR](#) [PHUM](#) [MASS](#) [PINR](#) [KJUS](#) [ETRD](#) [SMIG](#) [PO](#)
SUBJECT: U.S.-PORTUGAL COLLABORATION IN AFRICA

Classified By: Dana M. Brown, Pol-Econ Officer, U.S. Embassy Lisbon
Reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

¶1. (U) This is an action request. Please see paragraph 12 for details.

Summary

¶2. (SBU) AF/RSA Office Director Louis Mazel met in Lisbon with Portuguese officials from the Ministries of Interior, Justice, and Foreign Affairs on February 20-21 to discuss ongoing trilateral assistance programs with Portugal in Africa and to explore areas of possible future cooperation. Portuguese interlocutors were uniformly satisfied with ongoing efforts at cooperation in Lusophone Africa and solicited U.S. suggestions on new joint projects ranging from border control and judicial reform to consolidation of democracy and counter-narcotics efforts. End summary.

Border Controls and Multilateral Efforts

¶3. (SBU) Mariana Sotto Maior and Paulo Caldas from the Ministry of Interior reviewed the successful, ongoing collaborative program to enhance border controls in Mozambique. The cooperative effort -- which began in 2005 -- trains immigration officials to spot false passports, photo substitutions, and other alterations on official travel documents. The Portuguese police trainers also are working to improve the National Police's coordination on border control issues, and to train Mozambican police on emergency response procedures. In addition, the U.S. component of the assistance supplies the central database and the computers for Mozambique's police.

¶4. (SBU) Caldas reported that the program has been so successful that the Portuguese initiated similar efforts in Cape Verde and Sao Tome and Principe in 2007. He launched the program in Mozambique because he was the law enforcement attache at the Portuguese embassy in Maputo in 2005. He stressed that similar cooperation could easily be established through other Portuguese and U.S. embassies in Lusophone Africa and welcomed ideas for collaboration on future projects.

¶5. (SBU) Caldas noted that Portugal was involved in two other multilateral programs administered by the Interior Ministry. The European Commission (EC) agreed to have Portugal manage a 10 million euro assistance program in Mozambique, but provided no further detail. In addition to the EC funds, Portugal has begun working with UNICEF in Mozambique to establish safe havens for child victims of domestic violence.

Mazel noted that curbing trafficking in persons and forced labor is a major U.S. priority, so there could well be opportunities in the future to work together on this critical humanitarian issue.

Legal Assistance

¶16. (SBU) Ministry of Justice Deputy Director for International Programs Jose Andrade praised U.S.-Portuguese cooperation on the commercial law program in Angola. He echoed Caldas' assessment that this ongoing project made the most of the Portuguese language and legal expertise in Lusophone Africa as well as the U.S. experience in improving computer capabilities and commercial systems management in Angola. Andrade added that he hoped the United States would consider other trilateral cooperation, especially in Guinea Bissau.

¶17. (C) Andrade stated that, partially due to the lack of prisons and police stations, Guinea Bissau is on the verge of falling completely under the control of narco-traffickers. He confirmed that Portugal's Judicial Police (PJ) had sent one officer to Bissau to train local police, but he lamented that the Guinean force could do little to stop the traffickers since they had no means of conducting identity checks, preventing private, non-registered flights from landing on remote air strips, or holding suspected criminals for questioning. In fact, Andrade opined that it was nearly impossible for Guinean officials to stop or even slow the narco-traffickers' use of the country for transit of drugs to Europe and other destinations. He urged the USG to consider urgent assistance, especially for construction of prisons and police stations in the capital.

¶18. (C) AF/RSA Director Mazel acknowledged that continued, unhindered narco-trafficking in Guinea Bissau was likely not only to destabilize the country but could well increase the flow of drugs to Europe and possibly the United States. He asked whether Guinea Bissau's immigration controls at its international airport could be upgraded and linked to international databases so that known narco-traffickers from South America could be identified and the information transmitted to Interpol and other law enforcement entities. Andrade responded that the drug traffickers, in an effort to avoid scrutiny, often bypassed the capital and used private landing strips throughout eastern Guinea Bissau and had even constructed new roads to facilitate in-country transfer of narcotics.

¶19. (U) Regarding other legal assistance, Andrade reported that Portugal was working with Cape Verde and Angola to streamline the business registration process to promote higher compliance among businesses and to improve the investment climate for foreign investors.

Peacekeeping and Humanitarian Response

¶10. (SBU) AF/RSA Director Mazel noted to MFA officials that the United States and Portugal share an interest in seeing Africa consolidate democracies, enhance emergency response capacities, promote trade and investment, improve peacekeeping capacities, and prevent health epidemics. MFA Deputy African Affairs Director Isabel Ferreira agreed, adding that Portugal's latest participation in EUFOR in Chad and UNAMID in Sudan aimed to respond to the humanitarian crisis and prevent additional violence. Mazel asked whether Portugal had any indication of the willingness of Lusophone African nations to engage in peacekeeping activities. He noted Mozambique had received training under the ACOTA program but had only offered up three military observers to the UN Mission in Liberia (UNMIL). He added that the USG was interested in further engaging Angola on peacekeeping operations and training but that Angola had not shown much interest yet. Mazel shared with MFA officials a list of

African nations contributing to UN and AU peacekeeping missions on the continent, adding that many had benefited from U.S.-provided training under the ACOTA and ACRI/ACRF programs. He suggested that Portugal might play a positive role in nudging the Angolans towards a more active role in contributing to peacekeeping activities on the continent. He also suggested that the U.S. and Portugal could jointly train Angolan peacekeepers, utilizing expertise and training capabilities present in both countries.

¶11. (U) In response to a question, Mazel sought to clarify AFRICOM's mission and underscored President Bush' recent remarks that AFRICOM would not mean the establishment of new military bases on the African continent. He stressed that AFRICOM will involve the consolidation of ongoing activities into one combatant command that will enable the U.S. to focus more clearly on providing the type of military-to-military cooperation that African nations are requesting. Mazel added that AFRICOM will also contain a large civilian component (representing a number of U.S. agencies, including the State Department and USAID) that will be useful in assisting the military when it is called upon to lend its considerable logistical expertise in the event of a humanitarian crisis. Mazel noted that the U.S. military is often called upon to deliver humanitarian relief and cited efforts by the U.S. military to reach victims of the Southeast Asian tsunami who were stranded in remote locations only accessible by helicopter. Mazel made it clear that the headquarters would remain in Germany for the foreseeable future. Liberia was the only African country actively seeking to host the headquarters. Mazel added that Liberia not only recognized the significant economic benefits of an AFRICOM presence on its territory but also believed in the stabilizing impact that it could have on both Liberia and the region.

Future Cooperation

¶12. (SBU) Jorge Cabral, the MFA's Deputy DG for Political Affairs, praised the successes of our current trilateral cooperation in Mozambique and Angola and welcomed proposals for future collaboration. Mazel reiterated Ambassador Stephenson's recent suggestion to FM Amado that, in its current role as Chair of the Community of Democracies (CD), Portugal was well positioned to offer election support and observers to Angola. Cabral agreed that it seemed like a good opportunity and promised to discuss it further and consider approaching Angola with an offer.

¶13. (C) Action Request and Comment: The GOP - from the highest levels down - regularly expresses its desire to work with us in Africa. The follow-through, however, has been less than energetic, due primarily to bureaucratic inefficiencies. Nevertheless, the political commitment is genuine, and we want to continue to take advantage of it by proposing specific areas of collaboration that advance both our interests and those of our African partners. We would welcome the Department's guidance on potential areas of collaboration in Lusophone African nations that would make use of Portugal's linguistic and area expertise while furthering USG priorities. Democratization and rule of law, peacekeeping training, anti-terrorism and border controls, economic growth and development, and health strike us as potentially fruitful areas. End comment and action request. Stephenson